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Three suggesting arguments for history of social sciences

Giuseppe Iurato

University of Palermo, IT

E-mail: giuseppe.iurato@unipa.it

Abstract. Three possible history of science arguments with related hints and suggestions, ranging from ethnoanthropological to psychoanalytic context, are here briefly outlined. The first one mainly concerns with some digressions on symbolism and its early origins drawn from economic anthropology; the second argument regards possible psychodynamic bases underlying racism; and, finally, the third one deals with some historiographical considerations about the early moments incipient the dawning of Freudian psychoanalysis. There is no any intention to be exhaustive and complete in treating the related possible problematic issues raised by these three arguments, but we would want only claim the attention on the possible interest in further deepening such questions.

First argument: on symbolism

The ethnographic and ethnological work achieved by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the late 1940s has played a central role in Symbolic Anthropology, as well as in the general history of culture. In particular¹, he has pointed out the primary role played by the familial triadic structure in developing the symbolic function through the action of the *Œdipal phase*² which gives rise to the so-called *symbolic order*, marking the crucial passage from nature to culture. Following Françoise Héritier³, the prohibition of incest, which has an almost universal feature and characterizes the overcoming of the universal Œdipus complex⁴, has opened the road to every form of social exchange, relation and reciprocity, so providing the primeval grounding for any further social and cultural extrafamilial organization. Jacques Lacan has masterfully retaken these Lévi-Strauss' ideas in formulating his celebrated notion of *symbolic register*⁵ as a primary source for the *symbol* meant as the covering of a *lacking*, the only reality for the absence, and centred on the dialectic pair *absence-presence*, so inaugurating the human *desire*, as distinct from the human (physiological) *needs*⁶, by means of a continuous desiring process of referring, a signifying chain, from a signifier to another signifier starting from a primary signifier (the *Name-of-the-Father*), according to Roman Jakobson structural linguistics. Thus, the constitution of the human subjectivity is possible only when the *Otherness* is recognized, through which put in comparison own identity with the other one. Each child born in an

¹ See (Borgogno & Tresso 1976) and (Ingham 1996). The intertwinements between psychoanalysis and anthropology are still flourishing and fruitful within the framework of structuralism: see, for instance (Heald & Deluz 1994). Main common points are incest and aggressivity.

² Which, in its widest enunciation, comprises either the (Freudian) *Œdipus complex* (for males) from one hand, and the (Jungian) *Electra complex* (for females) from the other hand. The related *incest prohibition* is an almost universal principle, as also pointed out even by criminal anthropology and legal medicine.

³ See (Héritier 1979) and (Fabietti 2010).

⁴ Above all G. Ròheim, who inaugurated the psychoanalytic anthropology, has stressed the universality character of this complex, meant in a wider sense than the initial Freudian one.

⁵ That, with the *imaginary register* and the *real register*, provides the basic formal structure of human psyche and its dynamics. The human being is subdued to the predominance and omnipotence of the *symbol*. See (Borgogno & Tresso 1976), (Ingham 1996) and (Francioni 1978).

⁶ There is no other human need, besides the sexual one, for which human being cannot do without it. The sexual instinct is the only one which may have derogations, for instance by means of sublimation phenomena.

undifferentiated and lacking state, mainly due to the constitutional anatomic incompleteness and to the prolonged mothering, so for restoring the traumatic separation⁷ – as a single individual, due to the father action – from the symbiotic and pleasant maternal state⁸, in the child arises the *desire* of something which her of his feels lacking and that may be obtained only through symbolic representations referring to the own *Other* (the Ego) and the *Others out of self*, and not with a simple real object like in a need's satisfaction. This is the main gap, characterizing human being, between 'need' and 'desire'⁹, upon which Jacques Gomila has written an interesting essay¹⁰. As early as the late 1800s, Freud distinguished between a somatic sexual excitation¹¹ and a psychic sexual excitation in a suckling, the former very similar to a need whereas the latter should correspond to that desire that Freud designated with three main terms. But, what is truly important is point out the distinction between the somatic and the psychic feature of a sexual excitation process, which gives rise to the desire. In this regard, Freud states that such a semantic variety is mainly due to the strong impulse with which the desire pushes to throw itself towards the future because it is a seek for a pleasure (*pleasure principle*) both in reaching the (desired) satisfying object and in freeing the subject from all the obstacles which hinder such an impellent satisfaction (*reality principle*). This corresponds just to the overcoming of the Œdipus complex through sublimation, trying to convert primary process into secondary one. The latter is a necessary step mainly due to the prevalence of the *live instinct* (*Eros*) over the *death instinct* (*Thanatos*¹²), to hinder¹³ the killing of the father to couple with the mother together with a consequent anxiety production, but however always desiring his symbolic death since the father is the main object that forbids the total and immediate possession of the maternal object, ardently coveted by the baby-boy; and, mutatis mutandis for the baby-girl. Therefore, the desire is a living tension¹⁴ springing out

⁷ In this regard, see also second argument of this paper.

⁸ Which gives rise to the so-called initial *maternal imago*, and from which, on its turn, will spring out the imaginary register of the child.

⁹ From a neurobiological viewpoint, this is also due to the homination deconstrainment of the rigid animal instincts, which has provided a major freedom degree to sexual impulse, with respect to the other needs (like hungry, thirst, and so on), increased either by the bipedalism process and by the sexual availability of woman throughout the whole of the year (see (Oliverio 1982)). Following (Nelson et al. 2010) and (Opie et al. 2013), the sexual drive of cavemen was very strong, entailing a quite violent and competitive behaviour due to the high hormone levels, which was gradually tamed with the increasing degree of civilization and socialization, mainly through sublimation phenomena. These researches have also speculated that some Australopithecus species could have a monogamous status, and that social monogamy would be sprung out from attempts to contain male infanticide due to the main fact that, in an initial sexual promiscuity condition characterizing hordes, without a sure paternal figure who recognized the own paternity status, women weren't intentioned at all to continue nursing infants. Therefore, following, for example, the well-known F. Engels history of family, for a sort of connate life drive in which it was seen opposed the rising family to the existing horde, cavemen started to form first familiar nuclei having a prevalent monogamy character which slowly moved towards patriarchal settlements. Furthermore, the subjects of the first cave's paintings were mainly occupied with women nudity, with a wide use of red pigments (like menstruation blood), so giving rise to first female worships having more a therapeutic-erotic's aim rather than a religious one, to alleviate anxiety and doubts of man (loosely speaking) about her/his desire (see also (Schmandt-Basserat 1992)).

¹⁰ See (Gomila 1978) and (Roberts 1978).

¹¹ See also third argument of this paper.

¹² Which often operates through the *coaction to repeat* mechanism.

¹³ Through, for instance, *acting out* processes.

¹⁴ On the other hand, as early as H. Marcuse considered *Eros* as the essence of life, where a freedom space will allow the expression and sublimation of the Eros also at the creative and ludic level, trying to differentiate the own space from the collective one. Marcuse enunciates some original ideas on repression and the social emersion of the material removed through a projection, into the society, of what had been early introjected. Also W. Reich, as well as the Frankfurt school of Th. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, E. Fromm and others, dealt with possible intersections between Marxian theory and Freudian system.

of the incest interdict, and that, in its positive form, undergoes to a symbolic fulfilling (sublimation), whereas, in its negative form, releases in non-symbolic things (*fetishism*), this kind of bifurcation being made possible thanks to the action of the *disavowal mechanism* that J. Laplanche and J-B. Pontalis would want consider as a general human psychic mechanism Ego's splitting producing. This is the early Œdipal origin of the human desire which will be then accomplished mainly through symbolic transformations – by sublimation – of the primordial desires into conscious symbols hypostatized (through abstract reification¹⁵) in social and cultural practices and structures. In conclusion, according to Lacan theory, the psychic development performs according to four main stages: the maternal symbiotic phase, the mirror stage to reach the primary bodily unity, the Name-of-the-Father as representing the external world, and the desire to achieve – following Hegel – the ontological status with its various ontological declinations (see (Fossi 1983)).

The Œdipal function is therefore nothing but that a sublimation transformation closely connected with the crucial passage from primary process (ruled by pleasure principle) toward secondary process (ruled by reality principle), internalizing the Super-Ego normativity ruling libido through creation of social-cultural organizations which, meant as unconscious structures and hence undergoing to unconscious rules, allow a reciprocal communication among human beings otherwise impossible to have without supposing existing a common comprehensive structure (Lévi-Strauss)¹⁶. A social agreement is not the objective result but rather the sign of an underlying unconscious basis. Thus, when the child accepts the Father law, and if it has previously been accepted by the mother herself, then he or she is thrown into the symbolic net if and only if it is also present another fourth pivotal element, that is to say, the *Name-of-the-Father* (or paternal metaphor), which is a primary, irreducible founding law or norm stated and commonly shared by a given social aggregation (society, community, clan, and so forth), whose ethnographic origins should be traced into the primitive rites and customs, basically referring to the Phallus¹⁷. Following (Filloux 1996), it is reductive to see a simple triadic material structure into the Œdipus complex (and given by mother, father and child), because a fourth term always exists, namely a symbolic term which allows to identify the reciprocal position and role of each individual, as well as their relationships within symbolic register which allow them to communicate. In doing so, Lacan, by means of Lévi-Strauss, has casted another bridge between psychoanalysis and anthropology, recognizing the primary role played by the Œdipal function in establishing any possible social order through the intervention of a primary universal signifier – the Name-of-the-Father, or Law-of-the-Father – meant as a commonly shared and unifying element of the various triadic familial structures. The incest has not to be understood as hindering an exchange, but rather as addressing and re-orienting it according to a certain order without which one would have a reduction of the exchanges and a closure of familial nuclei. The exchange, therefore, is the indispensable and primary element for a social life, which operates upon three main objects: *words*, *assets* and *women*. For Lacan, the Œdipus is a structure pre-existing to every individual life because it has a dimension which transcends the familial novel that will realize it later; it acts to pull up the child out of maternal subjection through the intervention of the father who hinders the pre-linguistic aphasic reciprocity child-mother given by incest, introducing that interdict of the Law-of-the-Father upon which the symbolic order relies.

¹⁵ See (Collins 1980).

¹⁶ Following (Héritier 1979), just upon the notion of unconscious structure according to Lévi-Strauss, relies a useful and favourable meet's point between historians and ethnologists.

¹⁷ This might moreover explain the rising of ideologies.

From the 1910s onwards, within his second functional topic of human psyche given by the well-known three psychic instances *Ego* (consciousness), *Super-Ego* (normativity) and *Es* (instinct's seat), Freud¹⁸ began to consider deeply the structure and interrelations of the first two; with the work *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (of 1921), he alluded to a first dual structure of the Ego, distinguishing an *Ego's Ideal*, corresponding to the Super-Ego, from an Ideal Ego, mainly having a narcissistic source, even if Freud then considered Ideal Ego and Ego's Ideal as synonymous of each other. It was H. Numberg, in 1932, to distinguish these latter psychic agencies, then D. Lagache and J. Lacan since the 1950s, with a clear distinction between an Ideal Ego, having a narcissistic character due to the primary child identification with the mother, so giving rise to the *imaginary* register as seat of the *other*¹⁹ (*o*), and an Ego's Ideal-Super Ego system which presides the normativity, so attending at the symbolic function and allowing the establishment of the interpersonal relationships with the arising of the *symbolic* register as place of the *Other*²⁰ (*O*). The main psychic human development takes place from the dialectic and dualistic dynamics between the (maternal) Ideal Ego and the (paternal) Ego's Ideal-Super Ego system, hence from the dualism *O/o* which basically formalizes the Lévi-Strauss' crucial passage from nature (*o*) to culture (*O*) by means of the splitting, due to the incest prohibition, operated by the action of the Father Law in breaking the symbiotic tie child-mother, so marking the crucial passage from the maternal *imaginary order* (*o*) to the complementary one, that is, the paternal *symbolic order* (*O*), and introducing the child into the symbolic net. The Father names the child, giving symbolically his name together with the complex and variegated set of all its history, memory, legacy, tradition, myths and legends of his race, the sedimentations of the usual language, the ethnic background, the social-cultural environment until up the related ancestral past. Following (Iurato 2013), the dualistic, dialectic and inseparable interaction between the (maternal imaginary or fetishistic²¹ *o*) Ideal Ego and the (paternal symbolic *O*) Ego's Ideal-Super Ego system, hence between imaginary register and symbolic register, is mainly due to the action of a *disavowal mechanism* operating on the real register, whose essence is centred on the alternation *presence-absence* of the primary signifier, chief origin of the desire; roughly, following Freud, the child, on the one hand, rejects the reality through certain manners of behaviour, but not forbidding nothing to herself or himself, whereas, on the other hand and at the same time, he or she recognizes the reality danger, so assuming the anxiety as a pathological symptom, and trying then to protect herself or himself. Thus, this psychic mechanism – i.e., the disavowal – seems try to basically reconcile two opposite

¹⁸ See (Iurato 2013).

¹⁹ By means of the *mirror stage*, the other (*o*) takes place mainly through an initial identification with an own bodily integration of the initial distressing disaggregation condition in which the child was born, enabled through the maternal imago.

²⁰ In which the signifier chain will develop from the primary signifier, the *Law-of-the-Father*, through the mechanisms of the metonymic asynchronous concatenation (i.e., displacement) and of the metaphor synchronous selection (i.e., condensation). Each signifier, then, will tie with the signified through *anchoring points* individually assigned to give rise to a signification. Signifier and signified are into a coalescence state in the imaginary register, disjoining in the symbolic register through which takes place every possible form of human exchange. Everything which is out of these two registers, which cannot be neither imagined nor symbolized, belongs to the *real* register, linked to the anguish, suffering, death and sexuality dimensions, hence ruled by life and death drives; in it, there is the unthinkable, the unimaginable, the ineffable, the impossible, the enigma, what is still to be discovered, the place of the symptom, which may be known only through the symbolic order put in dialectic and dualistic interplay with the imaginary one (see (Richardson 1990), (Fossi 1983) and (Roudinesco 1993)).

²¹ This is coherent with what has been said above in regard to the coalescence between signifier and signified at the imaginary register level, because one of the main features of fetishism is just the confusion between these two characteristic aspects of the symbol, above the absence of the signifier function (see (Valeri 1979) and (Valeri 1999)).

tendencies²², above all to recognize and, at the same time, do not recognize the reality, but at the expense of an Ego splitting because, on the one hand, the fetish rescues the Ego creating a defence against the recognition of the childhood trauma and the consequent distressing threatens of personality disaggregation just due to this recognition, whereas, on the other hand, the fetish threatens the occurrence of an Ego's loss because subdues Ego itself to the predominance of the fetish. So, the synthetic function of the Ego is perturbed, with a consequent shattering of the Ego²³. The fetishism entails the creation of a unitary childhood's imago from experiences and features belonging to two different persons, namely the Self and the object. Indeed, the psychic mechanism of disavowal was many times invoked by Freud to explain fetishism, that later, around the late 1930s, he suggested to be at the basis of psychotic disorders as entailing an Ego's splitting when, in the child, a basic conflict arises, namely between a demand of the sexual drive (*Anspruch*) and the objection (*Einspruch*) moved by reality, and with respect to which he or she does not opt for one or the other, but choosing both. This situation, however, is closely related to castration anguish, hence to Œdipal phase, and is quite analogous to the one delineated above with regard to the action of the Œdipal function in ruling the desire, above all in the clear Lacanian framework of above, and hence, in relation to the formation of the ratio *O/o* formalizing the crucial passage from nature to culture²⁴.

First forms of internuclear social agreement go back²⁵ to the birth of the first forms of agricultural practices, namely around Holocene epoch, thanks to the rising of domestication practices. It is presumable that man appeared in lower Palaeolithic period, approximately 2.5 million years ago in Africa, during which a slow but constant social-cultural development took place. First sacred (hence religious) experiences may be traced in rituals occurred since high Paleolithic, and mainly having either a funeral and cosmological nature. However, there are different hypotheses on the origins and nature of religious phenomenon: amongst these, the sociological one²⁶ seeks in it a first attempt to comprehend and try to solve – or, at least, try to mitigate the related anxiety connected with the – pragmatic and existentialistic problems of human societies, so that it had a prevalent institutional aim. From the point of view of functionalism, the religious phenomena cannot be disjointed from any other social and cultural aspect, so that it is very difficult to identify historical priorities within them. The set of all social and cultural structures might be considered as mainly due to the action of the Œdipal function sublimation-producing to symbolically satisfy human desire. The nuclear family is the main basic social structure since primitive era, which has preceded every other structure and institution due to its primary, indispensable and unavoidable biological functions to which it accomplishes. On the other hand, from an anthropological standpoint²⁷, every religious phenomenon is basically characterized by an integrative and protective function; furthermore, aims and perspectives of religion are quite different from other possible type of intellectual activity, practice, scientific and aesthetic, so that the related symbolic functions cannot be put into

²² Which is one the main features of symbolic formation.

²³ The recent psychoanalytic trends are even more oriented to suppose, in any case, a splitted and multistructural nature of the Ego (see (Sasso 2011)).

²⁴ This Lévi-Strauss' stance might be further confirmed by the simple fact that, from a juridical anthropology viewpoint (see (De Lauri 2013) e (Sacco 2007)), the civil and penal legislations just born from the regulamentation of lawful and non-lawful human unions, kinships, marriages and so on. Therefore, the history of social and cultural anthropology cannot be disjointed by the history of law. On the other hand, nowadays the interdisciplinary viewpoint is an unavoidable method to attain every knowledge aim, that is to say, it characterizes the modern approach to any social and cultural discipline (see (De Lauri 2013)), above all for ethnological sciences.

²⁵ See (Gupta 2004) and (Sacco 2007).

²⁶ (Monaghan & Just 2000).

²⁷ See (Fabiatti 2010).

comparison among them simply because the symbolic activity of religion always and inevitably refers to a persuasive authority. Indeed, any religious system is not comprehensible outside the consideration of the relationships between power, authority and truth which, on the other hand, are the founding elements of any social structure having the nuclear family as an irreducible constitutive element²⁸, this being coherent with the main fact according to which every symbolic manifestation has always to be conceivable inside a given social context, since the symbolic function is the main common feature of all human activities such as poetry, art, religion, myth, science and language²⁹. The objects become symbols when they are settled and interpreted within a social-cultural system of reproduction of reality thanks to which the given social agreement has access. Thus, the symbolic value of a (symbolized) thing derives from its cultural lecture provided by the insertion of the latter into a circuit of social relations³⁰. Historically, first forms of symbolic function having a social valence came from environment, giving rise to a space symbolism which had not only aesthetic aims but above all a social end of agreement and of membership and integration within the given community or clan, coherently, for instance, with what has been said above on the main features of religious symbolism: for instance, it is well-known what primary role plays a church in accomplish such functions, that is to say, protection, integration and aggregation; likewise for architectural or urban symbolism, in which the archetypical sources play a notable role as well³¹. On the other hand, just every form of social agreement is always characterized by certain sets of relationships, hence exchanges, so that the notion of *exchange* is really a founding one from a sociological viewpoint, so characterizing almost every human aspect, from religion (e.g., with human relationships with the sacred) to every other one.

The first symbolic expressions³² seem to refer to forms of astronomical and cosmogonic religions, through which human being tries to cast a bridge between the Earth and the sky, seeing in the terrestrial realities images of the celestial ones. These symbols seem neither have any ordering form nor are linked to any clear phoneme or sound, except some rudimental phonetization linked to ritualization practices; they are multidimensional symbols, non-linear ideographs in which the related idea association is plurivocal. Therefore, at this stage of symbolic function, we infer that the complex, non-linear, syncretic and multidimensional human thought runs by imagines. From the periodicity character owned by astronomical phenomena, as well as from their intrinsic geometrical manifestation, it derived first forms of proto-mathematics having yet a mythological feature in which seems that a recurrent motif is related to the triadicity character of divinity (on its turn, maybe derived from the triadic structure of nuclear family). Nevertheless, as we have already said, this first symbolism, even if will arrange the grounding upon which the next scientific thought little by little will grow up, had a prevalent mythological nature. From lower Paleolithic³³ period to about 20,000 years ago, the humans relied on hunting and gathering as unique ways to live until up about

²⁸ See (Sacco 2007).

²⁹ See (Demarchi et al. 1987).

³⁰ We are at the bases of *symbolic interactionism* (G.H. Mead and H. Blumer). Following (Sias 1997), the symbols aren't interpretable but only present into a relation. Indeed, Sias retakes a quotation by F. Creuzer, according to which every symbolics requires a holy interpret, coherently with what U. Eco states, that is to say, behind every symbolics there always is a 'theology' which has the function to legitimate it (see (Speziale Bagliacca 1999)). Therefore, we may infer which primary role plays the semantic subfunction into that inseparable ternary structure of the symbolic order, provided by the tern {syntax, pragmatics, semantics}, whose elements are into reciprocal, unavoidable and inseparable relationships of each other.

³¹ See, for instance, the meaning of certain architectural stylistic geometrical forms of Gothic art.

³² See (Giannetto 2005).

³³ Roughly corresponding to the geological epoch of Pleistocene.

12,000 years ago, when humans began to devise and make experience of a whole set of new and useful behaviours during the so-called *Neolithic Revolution*, amongst which deliberately grow crops and animals, including a range of domesticated animals and plants, so giving rise to first agriculture forms having a social valence³⁴. At the same time, previous religious practices were implemented in this new human practices which, in turn, provided a more systematic ritualization with sacrifices, so giving rise to sacrificial and ritual worships³⁵. Accordingly, the same symbolic function enlarged its domain to comprehend not only celestial referents but also terrestrial realities, which both gradually were thus put together and into a reciprocal comparison. Therefore, the early cultural activities came from the implementation of previous religious experiences, which mainly had cosmological-astronomical vocations, into agricultural practices, so providing a more concrete character to the symbolic function itself, which was in a fully mythological stage. From that, the early forms of civilization, given by farming societies, arose during a period approximately comprised between 12,000 years ago and 5,000 years ago, whilst first forms of fairly sophisticated political, juridical and social organizations appeared in Mesopotamia as early as 4,500 years ago, with the dawning of the private law with the advent of the notion of private property³⁶. Following (Giannetto 2005), the complex and variegated framework formed by religious practices as well as by arithmetical, geometrical and astronomical knowledge imbedded into the new social-cultural-economical-political structures and organizations, gradually will give rise, around 3,000 BC, to the phonetic-alphabetic writing which will replace the previous non-linear and complex symbolic thought by multidimensional images, with a linear, sequential and unidimensional logical-verbal linguistic thought which marked, so to speak, the epochal passage from *mythos* to *logos*. Due to the connate gender's physiological differences³⁷, women were little by little excluded by agricultural activities and were therefore relegated only to familial concerns, but, at the same time, introducing matriarchal elements in religious systems with a net distinction between patriarchal and matriarchal archetypes³⁸: to be precise, the first were correlated with terrestrial divinities symbolizing the virile force, whereas the second were correlated with celestial divinities symbolizing the creation. Nevertheless, the patriarchy gradually prevailed upon almost every form of human activity, so giving rise to authority and hierarchy. Ever since primitive era³⁹, there was however a *continuum* of modes of exchange of assets, all referred to the reciprocity category, which ranged from the altruistic gift to the balanced or selfless exchange, until up the with-profit exchange.

³⁴ Following (Rampa 2010), the hunting *big game* of primitive societies led to the extinction of many animal species with a consequent paucity of food reserves, to which humans supplied only with the rising of agriculture and domestication.

³⁵ The term worship is etymologically linked to the term agriculture.

³⁶ Following (Rampa 2011), since early cavemen, first rudimental forms of private property existed, for example those given by a poor amount of little hunter's game gathered by a single individual.

³⁷ See (Goldberg 1973), where the author starts assuming physiological aspects of our own being which make us male and female. His main thesis assumes that male's dominance is deeply rooted in those unavoidable physiological gender differences between men and women. These physiological differences would also lead to cognitive and behavioural differences. This thesis therefore stresses the central importance of psycho-physiological factors, furthermore assuming that hormones influence the central nervous system, in turn influencing thought and action. This thesis therefore stresses too the central importance of neuro-endocrinological factors. Men respond to competition and threats with a stronger physiological response than women. And men also respond to status and hierarchy in a stronger way than women. Historically, there has never been a society without hierarchy and status. However difficult may be to accept these theses, they yet have a background of crude truth.

³⁸ In this regard, see the various works of the psychologist and philosopher Erich Neumann (1905-1960).

³⁹ See (Rampa 2010) where, amongst other things, an interesting application of game theory is pursued in analyzing possible primitive economy sceneries.

Following (Fabietti 2010), between resources and authority, there has always been an indivisible two-way relationship. The former may be material assets as well as ideal needs⁴⁰. The acquisition and availability of any resource either material or merely symbolic can never be fully disjoint from the occurrence of some form of authority. The ethnography, above all after the pioneering works of B. Malinowski, comprehends many cases in which primitive or archaic societies make asset's exchange apparently void of any immediate economic valence or meaning: amongst these, the reciprocal exchange of costume jewellery which mainly had ritual nature. Moreover, it was also possible to identify a distinction between prestige objects and usual wear objects, the former being able to symbolically acquire the latter. Certain prestige objects even had a deep symbolical meaning linked to the personal history of the owner: for instance, the circulation of certain objects belonging to qualitatively different sets of assets or objects, called *exchange spheres*, was also used for marriage ends; and when, for example, an asset or object overruns the given exchange sphere to which it belonged, then it will be in hold by an individual, so giving rise to the notion of private property. Anyway, the main symbolical meaning of such exchange objects relies on that wide set of social relationships which they were able to give rise and to which such objects have been basically predisposed inside a certain social net, this confirming the chief social source of symbolic function, hence the close relationships with authority and power. Therefore, besides their material nature, a deep symbolic valence had also owned by these objects, which went beyond a merely economic scope because thanks to them political aims or social prestige were reachable. The authority and power should be understood in its widest sense. Michael Foucault identified the deep unconscious nature of these latter, the implicit (or tacit) and pervasive occurrence of them, which often assume explicit forms of abstract reification (*hypostatization*⁴¹) among the various institutions; Foucault, for example, said that the power is everywhere, embodied in ourselves. Therefore, the authority and power cannot be identified only in the various social-cultural institutions simply because otherwise the various primitive or archaic societies would not have had any form of social organization, that isn't. The authority therefore springs out naturally from the social relationships themselves, simply where there is some social agreement or community. In any event, the economic anthropology⁴² states that at the early bases of every possible form of economic system is, as has been already said above, the principles of *reciprocity-symmetry* (between kinship's groups), *redistribution-centrality* (authority) and *exchange-financial market* (supply and demand law), which are institutionalized principles embedded in every form of social agreement, and inside which various forms of economic relationship take place. Besides this, another basic aspect should be considered is the production manners of the various resources, what is necessary and how we do for obtaining them.

⁴⁰ That is to say, having a purely symbolic nature. But, only in recent times a clearer and explicit distinction between material and symbolic resources has been recognized.

⁴¹ Following (Collins 1980), the action of any social-cultural organization or institution, meant as ideological reified abstractions (*hypostatizations*), is always, lastly, reducible to the action of a restricted number of individuals with their concrete human aims and scopes, who gather power and prestige from the work of their subalterns. Therefore, because of their own ideological nature commonly shared by the elements of a given collectivity, there are no doubts that an intrinsic and unconscious structure underlying such social-cultural entities should be brought back to certain universal elements commonly but unconsciously (hence symbolically) shared by almost all the members of this agreement, which, ultimately, refer to an as much common but irreducible structure, that is, the triadic familial nucleus. This is coherent with the notable structural anthropology ideas of Lévi-Strauss on the unconscious structures of institutions. Only in this very simple terms, we might understand a certain degree of temporal stability which has internally to characterize every human agreement, partial confirmation of this also coming from *human ethology* (see also (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 2001)).

⁴² Above all, after the studies of Karl Polanyi (1886-1964).

The first analyses of the modes of production were due to Karl Marx, who identified three main elements involved in any production process: i.e., the means of production, the manpower and the production relationships. The *means of production* are the raw matters and the involved knowledge and technology owned by a society in a certain historical moment; the *manpower* is the human energy involved in the production process, that is to say, the *work*; and, the *production relationships* are the various social relationships relating production means and manpower. The latter is the most important one, and has a chief diachronic feature: in primitive and ancient societies, prevailed slavery as a main production relationship, then, in medieval societies prevailed the feudal system, to reach later capitalistic societies in which appeared the *salaried work*, with which the workers sale their manpower, that becomes *workforce* bought by capitalists like a merchandise underwent to the main laws of a market, above all the supply and demand one. Marx states that any economic asset incorporates many and various elements amongst which the three ones mentioned above, mostly the production relationships. Marx stresses the social conditions underlying the production of any resource and, above all, the corresponding symbolic meaning underlying it, pointing out the fact that, both capitalists and workers, consider the resource as something a priori given naturally in the last form in which it occurs, making the resource as a fetish even if it is rather the result of a particular and historically social mode of production.

The economic anthropology has studied the forms of economic life of archaic societies starting from the works of Polanyi and Marx. The domestic communities analyzed by C. Meillassoux, as well as the so-called *vernacular societies* of S. Latouche, have shown how social relationships may influence economic activities of these agricultural communities. Indeed, due to the fact that in these social agreements where the authority is held by ancients and in which the only resources which could be regulated were the women ever since there was an equal free access to the various means of production (like land, tools, etc.), it follows that the control of women is the key-factor from which the power arises. Women, therefore, are the main resource thanks to which men may become independent, forming a new nuclear family of the given community, so feeding the domestic cycle with which the power will be later transferred to the next generation of seniors. Clearly, from a psychoanalytic standpoint, this refers to the action of the Oedipus complex and its overcoming, as well as to its meaningful symbolic valence in ruling life and organization of an archaic social agreement. The materialistic influence of the production manners cannot be disregarded if one sees to what drastic changes the incorporation of domestic community economic system (*affection's economy*) by capitalistic one (*value's economy*) has brought to the nuclear family structure⁴³; the capitalistic system has gradually incorporated the former, devaluing the principle of symmetry-reciprocity on behalf of the redistribution-centrality one, with a penalization from the social-cultural wellness standpoint of the little communities involved in such even more incorporating and globalizing process. From an ethnographic viewpoint, it turns out that almost every attempt to modify a well-established economic framework of a given autonomous social agreement without taking into account the related social-cultural roots upon which it relies and depends on, has led to a failure. Furthermore, the introduction of new agricultural techniques has deeply changed the structure itself of social relationships both internally (in regard to the relationships between members of the same group) and externally (in regard to the relationships between members and the environment of production, like land, fauna, flora, etc.); for instance, in certain archaic societies, the agricultural practices were closely and inextricably linked with a series of ritualistic representations

⁴³ See (Fabiotti 2010).

which have as main reference point the land, considered as a living and generating organism. In short, society, rituals, and productivity are closely interconnected amongst them. In particular, the farming cultivation and crops have a precise meaning in dependence on the related seeds, so when new techniques proposed hybrid seeds, they felt an increasing weakness predominating over their social-cultural context which was so strong and ruled by reciprocity-symmetry principle which warranted a compactness and a solid social agreement that went even more lost as these hybrid seeds taken upper hand, so giving rise to an individualistic and disaggregating market logic (like in mercantilism), turned towards personal money accumulation, with a consequent drastic change of the social relationship sphere. At the same time, the new agricultural trend seemed to have modified as well the ritualistic modalities with which themselves relate with nature: for instance, we attend to the passage from the sacredness of farming cultivations to the contempt of the hybrid seeds, whilst, as regard propitiatory rituals, whilst before the land was the main object of these rituals, now we see a gradual transfer of propitiatory offerings to the new technologies, like water holes, motor pumps and so forth, decorating them with coloured ribbons and flowers. At the same time, modern economists have not seen what deep symbolic meaning there was in certain behaviours of archaic and primitive societies, which were summarily reclassified as non-economic or however disadvantageous, like shell out many money in sacred rituals⁴⁴ amongst which many patron feasts and ancestor commemorations. The recent anthropological thought, instead, does not see a kind of economic irrationality in these collective behaviours, but rather the symbolic need to satisfy a desire considered as primary to be fulfilled to reach a certain purpose. Therefore, it would be the social-cultural codex of a certain society, in a certain period, to establish what is rational or not, even if a great problematicity gives rise the notion itself of rationality: for instance, in anthropology, it is well known what drastic change of value, from merely symbolic to economic one, undergo many tribal art objects when these are put into a given circuit like museums and antiquarians⁴⁵.

Coming back to Marx, we would like to highlight some points of his thought which would turn out to be useful to shed further light in the origins of symbolism. Indeed, already in (Iurato 2013), we have stressed the possible role played by disavowal mechanism in the rising of symbolic function, just starting from elementary mathematical context since we think that history of the early mathematics may turn out to be useful to study origins of symbolic function. On the other hand, for what has been said above, further ethnographic considerations concerning proto-history of mathematics might turn out to be useful to further confirm or corroborate this hypothesis. Exactly⁴⁶, the history of the truly early stages of the mathematical thought dates back to Paleolithic period. The first attempts of counting, going back to Neanderthal men and their ritualistic practices so that, in this regard, the general anthropological context cannot be avoided in history of mathematics. Since 50,000 years ago, humans were able to make paints which shown the reaching of a remarkable geometrical esprit, so it seems that spatial-visual skills and abilities had to precede the advent of the first primordial rudiments of elementary arithmetic. The historian of mathematics Dirk Struik pointed out that the first valuable progresses in counting taken place with the rising of agriculture practices, that is to say, with the so-called Neolithic revolution which was also characterized by an improvement of the geometrical insight. But, the recent history of mathematics has gone beyond, thrusting until the night of time. Indeed, following (Israel & Gasca 2012), on the

⁴⁴ These customs, however, are still widespread in many localities of South Italy in which folkloristic and religious traditions are still well-rooted and alive into the social tissue.

⁴⁵ In this regard, see also (Graeber 2001).

⁴⁶ See (Israel & Gasca 2012), (Struik 1981), (Bagni 1996) and references therein.

basis of the important work of the archaeologist Denise Schmandt-Basserat⁴⁷, the first explicit numerical counts date back to about 8,000 years ago, when the first agricultural settlements appeared in the Near East. The performances of these counts were possible thanks to ovoid shells (like Nuzi's one, or the so-called *bullae*) containing clay balls as tokens and upon whose surface there was a key-legend of various objects and things mainly referring to agricultural context, hence having a practical counting purpose like a sort of primitive ledger. Nevertheless, there still was a strict connection (that is to say, in modern words, a bijective correspondence) between the type of tokens and the type of what they stand for. In Neolithic period, we have an autarchic economy based on barter and in which the so-called *surplus* wasn't necessary to be pursued because any familial nucleus just produced the right necessary to be self-sufficiency for itself, and this is the condition to which has to satisfy every familial nucleus. With the metal ages, instead, the first work's specializations arose, so that the economy underwent new laws and rules, with a consequent new social-cultural organization forced to produce a surplus to maintain those people who are assigned to jobs not producing any primary asset. Accordingly, a new social consciousness arose, together with a civic sense, just thanks to this new economic system mainly based on metal manufactures; this, furthermore, taken place above all in the regions of Mediterranean basin, differently by other areas in which still persisted an autarchic agricultural economy because not came out from stone age. This is an incontrovertible prove how economic context influenced, and still influences, the various social-cultural organizations. All this also contributed to renew the countable system itself, with the invention of new counting tools which replaced the previous ones based on an exact two-way correspondence between tokens and assets⁴⁸, until up the invention, about 4th-century BC, of clay tablets in which, for each quantity of a certain merchandise, a specific ideographic symbol (sign) was appointed in relation to the *quality* of this merchandise together another symbol which denotes the *quantity* of this asset. Thus, we have a crucial and epoch-making distinction which wasn't there before, that is to say, the explicit categorical distinction between *quality* and *quantity*, with the use of an abstract symbol, called *number*, to denote the latter independently from the former. Therefore, in these new clay tablets, an abstract *numerical symbol*, quantity estimating, is appointed to another distinct sign rigidly referring to the quality of a given asset, the former being determined by precise ratios arising from the comparison amongst different sets. This phylogenetic origin of number, basically springing out from the reciprocal comparison between sets of different elements (assets, merchandises, etc.), is on the other hand well-known either from an historical viewpoint (see, for instance, (Giusti 1999)) and from those ontogenetic viewpoints which would want to identify, in such a comparison procedure, the really early origins of the concept of number in children (like, for instance, did Jean Piaget). Nevertheless, we have reconsidered this fact to highlight other possible perspectives. Firstly, it seems that the first explicit expressions of human abstract symbolic function should be referred to the rising of numbers because the history of mathematics, following (Israel 2011), says us that the emergence of number marked the birth of symbolic thought in close relation with the development of writing. Also the economist Adam Smith said that numbers were the first abstract ideas that human mind could able to imagine (see (Struik 1981)). Secondly, therefore, from all that, it also follows that the writing would be sprung out from countable reasons and not for representing a discourse. Thirdly, from an

⁴⁷ She states that with symbolic function started human culture. The unique archaeological findings in our own, date back to Neanderthal man of Mousterian epoch, as late as 60,000 to 25,000 BC: see (Schmandt-Basserat 1992).

⁴⁸ For instance, in the case of ten ewes, we would have had ten distinct tokens, each of which specifically denoting a ewe.

historical viewpoint, humans started to represent objects and their number, in a very concrete manner and in its simplest form, that is to say, through other more suitable objects able, by a nomination act, to better accomplish this representation function, via a concrete bijective correspondence. Later, along a phylogenetic order, this realistic representation gradually will replace real objects with graphical denotations whose sets⁴⁹, put into reciprocal comparison, will give rise to a more abstract degree of representation replacing a set of certain objects with a unique symbol denoting their possible common quantity (number), while a phoneticism will denote the type or quality of the objects. Therefore, with a common origin, language and number seem to be sprung out at almost the same time – according to Schmandt-Basserat’s theory – but then following two independent ways, and this because either stimulated by the same tension (due to human desire) towards symbolic abstraction⁵⁰ which pushed upon an initial undistinguished mix between these two chief categories, i.e., quality and quantity.

Now, from what has been said so far, this latter phylogenetic evolution which has led to the crucial separation between quantity and quality, is inseparable from the historical changes regarding the given social-cultural conditions, in turn depending on the economic settlements of the given period. Therefore, it seems not fully meaningless to claim attention on the possible dialectic-materialistic influence of economic systems on the birth and development of this symbolic abstraction process through the rising of number, essentially given by the above mentioned crucial separation between the two chief categories of *quality* and *quantity*, and that, at the same time, has marked their rising. Therefore, what might have been the reasons of this crucial bifurcation for the dawning of symbolic function? In this regard, we go back again to some further aspects of Marxist thought system. Before all, as regard any possible good or merchandise, Aristotle⁵¹ was the first to explicitly study, on the basis of a theory of money, the formation of the good’s value, pointing out the distinction between *use value* and *exchange value* on the basis of an historical recognition of the previous economic systems. According to Aristotle, roughly speaking the *use value* is an intrinsic feature of the given good and it is linked to the nature itself of the good; the *exchange value*, instead, is a common feature present in every good which accomplishes to the exchange functions between different goods. Aristotle makes this distinction to legitimate the first forms of good exchanges, first of all the barter, meant as the first and most natural manner of commercial activity; instead, the later human commercial and economic activities will have a more factitious character, formally represented by the first money theories, so giving rise to monetary economies whose early origins date back ca. to 1,500 years ago with the rising of first forms of social-political organizations. Nevertheless, ethnoanthropological studies show that, since primitive ages, first rudimental forms of a good-coin existed, which often could have not only an economic mean but rather a ritualistic and ceremonial one related to relationships between distinct exchange spheres, having a prevalent social tie scope with a more personal meaning in respect to the modern impersonal feature of the next monetary systems where coin gradually will acquire a prevalent treasurization aim and a value unity measurement meaning. Therefore, coin has historically undergone a truly complex re-semantization process, starting from certain objects and goods whose intrinsic nature allowed to perform such a

⁴⁹ In passing, we recall that the origins of the term of the usual unknown x (ics) is referred to a ‘thing’, a ‘quod’.

⁵⁰ Which seems to be supported by a previous predisposing intuitive visuospatial skills which should be meant existing before any other possible next symbolic function development. This is also coherent with what S. Dehane has supposed to be the main mechanisms underlying consciousness, amongst which are those just related to vision.

⁵¹ See (Majorana 1926) as well as the well-known St. Thomas Aquinas commentaries to Aristotle’s works (above all, the *Commentary on Aristotle’s Politics*).

function of intermediary exchange's mean, until metallic coins of mercantile economies recognized within a given local social-cultural context and that will lead to first forms of organized political economies. In any case, during the crucial passage from stone age to metal ages, money gained a more economic meaning with the introduction of metal coins as a *real money* which later will be distinguished from the so-called *imaginary money* having a mere symbolic function devoid of any material metallic content and exclusively arranged as a mere value measure and suitable neither to exchange ends⁵² nor treasurization aims, distinction that practically will disappear in 18th-century. The above Aristotelian distinction between use value and exchange value will then lead to the well-known *paradox of value* (first explicitly approached by F. Galiani⁵³ long before 1776 A. Smith attempts) which arose from the failed previous attempts to explain value by means of utility.

Approximately, the *value* of a resource, merchandise or asset, refers to the quality and quantity of other resources, merchandises or assets with which the unity of a given resource, merchandise or asset may be exchanged. It is measured in monetary unities, and does not refer to the materiality of the given resource, merchandise or asset. As has been said above, Aristotle was the first who explicitly distinguished two main types of values, that is to say, *use value* and *exchange value*, even if such a distinction should already be implicitly present. For our ends, we now overcome those authors who have, after Aristotle, made further investigations and studies on these central notions of value theory, like A. Smith, D. Ricardo, R. Cantillon and others, directly pointing on Karl Marx work⁵⁴. He retaken such a classification, considering the use value of a good as immediately perceivable in the good itself and inherent to quantity's category, whereas the exchange value is considered as immaterial and perceivable only through relationships (exchanges), when a good acts as equivalent to another good. Marx stresses the importance of this last equivalence's character related to exchange value, above all in relation to goods having different use values but amongst which it is more difficult to establish their equivalence or not. This latter operation, on the other hand, is also closely related with the one underlying the above mentioned crucial categorical bifurcation between *quality* and *quantity*, because it will allow to identify distinct sets of objects (e.g., goods), embedded into an exchange circuit, qualitatively different but having the same *number* of elements, that is to say, quantitatively equal sets. This is, on the other hand, a well-known fact of the foundations of mathematics concerning the distinction between sets within the G. Cantor framework (and dating back to the 1870s), that is to say, to be aware that two sets may be different between them when they have either qualitatively different elements or a different number of elements. One of the main points upon which relies the definition of (formal) *set* according to Cantor, is just the capability to distinguish its elements which must be determined in a very precise manner, so introducing, besides the categorical notion of quantity, the anthropomorphic categorical notion of quality, even if such basic categorical notions were already known ever since Aristotle.

⁵² Or rather, it is also thinkable as a measure of virtual exchanges.

⁵³ In his 1751 celebrated work *De Moneta*, where, amongst other things, starting from previous works made by B. Davanzati (16th-century) and G. Montanari (17th-century), in a pioneering manner he, for the first time, introduced the notion of *marginal utility* just to solve this paradox. In such a treatise, first forms of the so-called *exchange equation* (which links together, through money, the exchange value with the amount of assets exchanged) may be traced, though also J. Bodin, around 1569, gave a similar formal expression. Such an equation will also receive attention by D. Hume in 18th-century and by J.S. Mill in 19th-century, while its definitive algebraic formulation will be given in 1911 by I. Fisher, so that it should be more correctly named *Davanzati-Galiani-Bodin-Mill-Hume-Fisher equation*. However, for a more complete historical view of the paradox of value, see (Ekelund & Thornton 2011) and (Ekelund & Hébert 2014).

⁵⁴ Following the survey paper (Valeri 1979), which is the main reference here followed. Valerio Valeri (1944-1998) has been a valid philosopher and anthropologist who taught at the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa and at the University of Chicago.

Therefore, coming back to the above discussion, if the exchange value of a resource is independent from its use value, from its materiality – since it is immaterial – then, how can it may be apperceived without the intervention of something which acts as a signifier? Accordingly, it is just from the need to have something with a material nature as a mark for this immateriality, that springs out of all those ‘metaphysical sophistications’ of the resource which are nothing else that fetishistic deformations of it but thanks to which it will be possible to apperceive its exchange value, inherent its *quality*. Marx, on the basis of the thought of Kant and Hegel about fetishism, points out that it is just the fetishism to be at the foundation of the chief dialectics between material and immaterial, between use value and exchange value. The fetishism will give rise to a resource (e.g., good *B*) whose use value, its materiality, will be the symbol of the use value of the initial resource (e.g., good *A*) to which the former is put into reciprocal comparison, so that the materiality of the good *B* becomes the mirror of the use value of the good *A* (i.e., the *Wertkörper* of *B*).

For instance, let *A* be a given snip of *silk*, and *B* a *dress* made with it, so that the use value of the good *silk* is now expressed into, or mirrored by, the body of the good *dress*, so that the use value of a good (i.e., *A*) is expressed into the use value of another good (i.e., *B*), which are yet linked together by an exchange value given by the *work* needs for building up such a dress. Therefore, it is possible to think that both use values of these two goods are nothing but the manifestation of a unique substance, the *work*, that makes them reciprocally comparable and exchangeable. Thus, the exchange does not create use value, but manifests it which, at the same time, is also occuded in its real nature. Hence, such an exchange value, as a signifier, *symbolizes*⁵⁵, through the *work*⁵⁶, those equivalent use values (signified) owned by the two given goods put into reciprocal comparison. In our case, the above dress of silk has both an exchange value given by its immediate perception of exchangeability, and an use value given by its materiality (e.g., given by the wellness of freshness, for instance, in a summer day). This enigmatic and multiply character inherent in the (simple fetishistic) pair snip-dress, which, in turn, refers to the dialecticity of the pair use value-exchange value, is lost if one looks at its extreme (generalized fetishistic) symbolization given by the *price*. The higher the fetishistic level, the wider the symbolization given by monetarization. It is through the second level fetishism, which gives rise to *money* (as a fetish), that one can descry a wider quantitative equivalence between resources having different or heterogeneous use values, hence between qualitatively different resources, comparing the related involved *salaried work*, which is a social relation and is the result of a first level fetishism as a first degree manifestation of exchange value. The illusion of first level fetishism consists in a material value exchanging (say *f*, i.e., the work) between two resources (say $A \xrightarrow{f} B$) as a manifestation of an immaterial value (exchange value, i.e., the work) which is that common element between these two resources which makes them quantitatively equivalent of each other, along the exchange itself. Afterwards, when we go on with a second level fetishism, then it will be possible to enlarge this comparison, for instance between two different exchanges $A_i \xrightarrow{f_i} B_i$ $i = 1, 2$ as outlined above, through a *monetarization* of each of these latter (operating on f_i), which takes place within a given social-political organization (so giving rise to a *political economy*) that, in turn, is historically determined (*historic* and *dialectic materialism*). The so-called *alienation* of the worker just acts on this last passage, while the (second

⁵⁵ Coherently with the social nature which must have a symbol.

⁵⁶ Marx states that it is the result of a *first level* (or *simple*) *fetishism*, while a salaried work is the result of a *second level* (or *generalized*) *fetishism* money producing. The money, therefore, is a fetish, and this interpretation might be usefully put into comparison with the one provided by psychoanalysis, and vice versa.

level) fetish creation, *money*-producing, denies a basic reality, namely the underlying social exchange relationship (already denied with a first level fetishistic production given by *work*), that may be mystified contrarily to money which is, instead, unanimously recognized. Therefore, Marx provides a two-level fetishism theory of the use value in which the various exchange relationships underlying among resources, goods or assets are nothing but that a connate human attitude to satisfy needs and, above all, desire⁵⁷, coherently with what has been said above. This Marxian theory of fetishism has many common points with the Freudian one, above all the main fact that fetishism is characterized by a basic contradictory relation⁵⁸ with reality inasmuch it provides a *fictitious* representation of reality (e.g., by a neurotic, or by society) which nevertheless, at the same time, makes also possible a *true* (or tolerable) representation of it. On the other hand, also the previous theories of fetishism, like those of Ch. de Brosses and A. Comte, recognize that a kind of fetishistic synthesis, although false in itself, expresses a true relationship between natural and supernatural according to Brosses, or between human and nature, as well as it realizes a first conceptual framework in which to lay out and classify the data of the various observations according to Comte. In short, almost all the fetishism models have the basic common idea according to which fetishism implies a union between something of human with something of non-human⁵⁹, between something animated with something non-animated, while the related fetish is either accessible (when it is material) and not accessible (when it has a symbolic nature), manifesting presence and lacking, is the recognition and the misrecognition of the residues of a given society which, therefore, are disguised. The accessibility, as well as the sense of power that fetish offers to the perverted, indeed hides her or his inability to recognize and accept the reality, the real essence, to avoid the traumatic anguish of such a recognition, but with a consequent, unavoidable fragmentation of the own Ego. Another common feature between Marxian and Freudian fetishism models, is the fictitious separation of a *part* (or *partial object*) from a *whole* (or *total object*): for Marx, it is the use value of a resource to be considered as a part (or an attribute) of a whole, i.e. the human work (first level fetishization of exchange value), which has produced it and incorporates it. This attribute, splitted or separated from the human substance (work) that has produced it, becomes a fetish. The work, according to Marx, is the essence of the species (*Gattungswesen*) of the human beings. Of course, nowadays these Marxian ideas⁶⁰, in all their greatness, should be contextually re-interpreted just according to the intrinsic features of his materialistic theory, which is dialectic and historic, that is, it should be synchronously re-examined, because the true nature, or else, the real characteristic of history, is just to be materialistic, and the ethnoanthropological sciences confirm this. For instance, the capitalist is socially perverted since he or she overestimates, in the other, only those attributes which may turn out to be acquired by capitalist, that is to say, her or his workforce at first level fetishistic view, or else, the related good so fetishistically produced. This view might be extended or

⁵⁷ See (Baudrillard 1972).

⁵⁸ In almost every theory of symbolism, on the other hand, a basic contradictory, or dualistic, or oppositional feature is always present, and put at the foundation of symbolic production.

⁵⁹ Initially, fetishism was introduced to explain first attempts of primitives to represent nature, as well as to symbolize divine phenomena, through objects. Therefore, the usage of fetishes marked the birth of first primitive forms of culture as well as the first means through which to relate with nature and represent it. In any case, the fetish, in general, does not belong to a well-defined class of objects since it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between its signifier and signified, its main feature lying in the fact that, only through its phenomenological manifestation, it is possible to descry its value which, nevertheless, remains quite omitted.

⁶⁰ Independently of the limits of Marx's theory from a proper economic standpoint, such a theory surely plays a very fundamental role from the point of view of human sciences. Indeed, it is undeniable that the social-cultural modes of being play a preeminent role in influencing human actions.

generalized, supposing, for example, that the human being is basically perverted because almost always he or she sees, in every social relationship, only some aspects of the whole, concrete totality of the *person* (not individual), of the complex integrity of the *Self*. Often, fetishes are associated to what has an extreme residual moral status in a given social context, like the desire of power, vindication, and so forth.

Closely related to that of value is the as many important notion of *utility*⁶¹. In the history of economy, first traces of such a notion date back to the resolution of the *St. Petersburg paradox* by D. Bernoulli in the early 1700s, while, as said above, from attempts to solve the *paradox of value*, F. Galiani, in his 1751 celebrated work *De Moneta*, implicitly introduced the notion of *marginal utility*. Then, the so-called *marginalistic* school stressed the importance of the notions of asset's consume/use and of *utility*, that every consumer or user may get. This school has made use of many psychological notions and laws to try to define utility, even to be called *psychological* school as well⁶². The *utility*⁶³, roughly speaking, may be defined as the degree of satisfaction aroused by the consume/use of a certain quantity of a given economic asset. It is also possible to define utility as the attitude, true or alleged, of a good to satisfy a primary need or a desire (J. Bentham). In this regard, J. Fisher and Ch. Gide suggested to call it *desirability*, to highlight the essential subjective-psychological character of such a notion. The utility is also definable, following J. Bentham, as the capability of a general economic good or resource to rise pleasure (desire) for cutting displeasure (anguish). The 19th-century economists spook of the overall wellness of an individual to define utility, hence a numerical estimate of her or his happiness, so that they supposed consumers tried to maximise it. Therefore, due to the links with human desire, they believed that the utility could be measured through a cardinal scale, whereas nowadays it is known that only an ordinal scale may be used for estimating it. Indeed, great conceptual difficulties arose about utility and its attempts to quantify it, mainly due to the fact that a preeminent role is played by the possible choices of consumer, highly variable from an individual to another one. Therefore, it seemed more proper to consider *preference* as a main parameter to estimate utility, hence using an ordinal scale rather than a cardinal one, until up to use an isotone *utility function* for ordering preferences. To estimate variations of the latter, it is need to consider three main types of utility in dependence on the possible quantitative subdivisions of a good in equal doses, so that we have a *dose* utility, an *initial* utility in reference to the satisfiability gained by the consume/use of the first dose of good, and a *marginal* utility in reference to the satisfiability gained by the consume/use of the last dose of good. Moreover, the utility may be *direct*, when the need or desire satisfaction arises from the immediate and direct consume/use of the good, and *indirect*, when the good provides other good having direct utility. There exist some basic laws which rule the variations of utility in dependence on the variations of good doses, like the so-called *Jevons-Gossen laws*. The marginalistic school stressed the dependence of value on utility: for instance, the use value is simply the utility of a given good, hence meant as satisfaction's capability of an individual. According to W.J. Jevons, the economic theory is nothing but that a computing of pleasure and pain, meant in their psychological meaning, pointing out the primary role played by marginal utility in pursuing this. In passing, from what has been said above, first attempts to (unconsciously) use the notion of utility in doing preferences might be linked to the early origins of formal ordering ability of human consciousness, since, as we

⁶¹ See (Samuelson & Nordhaus 2002) and (Schumpeter 1972).

⁶² Not by chance, the psychophysical *Fechner-Weber law* was also used to formulate the notion of marginal utility.

⁶³ See also (Varian 2002).

have seen, the main formal feature of utility is just its ordinal nature. At the same time, we have also seen that a manipulation (also at unconscious level) of the notion of value, with its distinction in use and exchange value, would have led to the crucial separation or bifurcation between the categories of *quality* and *quantity*, with the birth of first forms of symbolic abstraction provided by number. The pragmatic use, mainly carried on at unconscious level, of these notions of value and utility has, therefore, led respectively to the rising of early forms of symbolism, with the advent of number, and to the dawning of ordering abilities, with the institution of a system of social choices or preferences. All that suggests⁶⁴ a prevalent *materialistic* origin of the fundamental, basic notions of elementary mathematics, that is to say, *number* and *order*, as basically sprung out of the early forms of human agreements and related social-cultural-economic activities. Following (Israel & Gasca 2012), it seems moreover that a kind of hidden ordinal numerals (that is to say, unconsciously present) preceded the rising of cardinal number concept, so that first, second, third, and so on, preceded the rising of one, two, three, and so on; furthermore, the former one had a prevalent anthropomorphic nature, having being linked to concrete sets of things or persons: for instance, as regard the first collective numerals, *duo* referred to a pair of persons, *trio* referred to a group of three persons, and so on. From these unconscious ordinal numerals arose, after a long development process, (cardinal) numbers. In ancient languages and in primitive people without writing systems, there was a primordial sequence of the type «one, two, many»: for instance, in Wedda tribe of Sri Lanka, there only was a sequence of four terms for ordinal numerals, as «single, couple, one extra, many». In any case, also on the basis of a kind of *embodiment* origin of proto-mathematics (see also (Iurato 2013) and references therein), by a multiethnic comparison, it turns out that the number is an intrinsic human feature, as well as the language. Number sprung out, therefore, from the almost universal human need to consider and estimate sets of objects, hence from the connate tendency towards the account for the quantity of objects or things, so that number arose through the symbolic representation of such quantities, whose first manifestations historically occurred with practical, logistic and economic activities.

Second argument: on racism

The great and severe problem of racism is yet old as mankind at least until up appeared the idea of *human race* that, according to the latest social-anthropological researches, is devoid of any scientific basis, but it is only a mere though ubiquitous social-cultural phenomenon which should be historically understood in its deep ethnographic roots. What truly makes difference between distinct human agreements is only the social-cultural world in which them live. Notwithstanding that in many countries explicit forms of racism have become increasingly a social taboo, nevertheless even in those who manifestly display egalitarian explicit attitudes, a sort of implicit racism is still maintained unconsciously. Therefore, if one wish to seek possible causes or reasons to this phenomenon, then a possible outlook might be provided by psychoanalytic context, although just the psychodynamic trend was at once abandoned after some first studies made tomorrow Nazi tragedy, above all by German psychologists and social scientists like D. Katz and some exponents of the Frankfurt school. On the other hand, the so-called *symbolic racism*, which is maybe the most prevalent racial attitude today, has many implicit or unconscious aspects, as recently pointed out by

⁶⁴ Also coherently with related Piaget's theories, if one considers the right ratio between a phylogenetic and ontogenetic development of human psyche.

(Whitley & Kite 2010) and (Tarman & Sears 2005), so that it seems quite obvious to think to adopt, yet again, a psychodynamic view, at least to try to explain some features of this social phenomenon. To be precise, we focalize on the main fact that often the social groups involved in this phenomenon have a particular position from an historic-ethnographic stance, in the sense that the racism is often⁶⁵ displayed toward that ethnicity having a longest phylogenetic origin along the crucial historical human migration movement pathway⁶⁶, at least for those ethnicities which may be locally placed around it, or simply towards those people which stay in the southern zones⁶⁷. Then, if one looks at the unconscious features of this archaic and ubiquitous phenomenon, it would be possible to suppose that its early reasons might be ascribed to certain archetypical motifs of the collective unconscious. To be precise, we would like to put, at the basis of racism, a phylogenetic extension of the so-called *trauma of birth* exposed by Otto Rank dating back 1923 but published in a celebrated work of 1924, also on the basis of previous Freudian ideas. This trauma was introduced by Rank to basically explain a universal human experience, as the anguish, through another as many universal event, the birth, meant as a prototrauma. Following (Fossi 1983), Rank claims that, during pre-uterine life, the foetus experiences a total and blissful total union with the mother which will continue in the next life course as a seek for a total fulfilment. But the birth breaks this condition of beatitude in such a manner to become insomuch traumatic to be, due to the complete absence of Ego's defences, the prototype as well as the origin of every next anxieties due to the fear of separation, producing a kind of anxiety's reserve which will be re-enacted every time a separation's event occurs. At the birth, the child is fully unable to acquire an her or his own defence's system, so experiencing a heavy and overpowering set of stimuli against which he or she cannot build up any defence barrier. Thus, the rising corporal Ego experiences or feels a so strong impotence sense to be out of the control of the child, the related response of the Ego in front of such an intense and immediate experience to be overwhelmed by anguish. Therefore, the desire to re-establish the blissful of pre-uterine condition enters into conflict with the remembrance of the birth's trauma with the related anxiety. This Rank's conception was accepted by Freud, notwithstanding the next breakdown between them, bringing back the anguish to this original trauma⁶⁸. The birth is the only event of human life characterized by such an high, sudden, violent and drastic change either in the surrounding environment and in the physiological conditions in such a manner to make it a unique and singular event, also due to the imposingness of the obstetric material operation itself if one looks at the foetus dimensions. Such a singular traumatic experience will be variously symbolically relived in many other occasions of life of an individual. Freud, therefore, considered Rank's viewpoint as valid only to enlarge his sight on anguish, regarding birth as the prototype of a fundamental and primary situation in which human being undergoes to the higher stimulation both intern and extern. When such a situation re-occurs another time in which the individual has neither any knowledge or fully awareness of it nor any capability to cope it with available defence or protective means, then a new situation re-appears but still characterized by a rapid excessive stimulation which releases a painful and terrifying discharge assuming the form of a severe primary

⁶⁵ Of course, since we have to do with social phenomena, the case studies here considered not cover all the possible cases, but a certain number of them.

⁶⁶ Which roughly has a two-branch structure given by two main geographical departure points, one placed around Atlantic coasts of central Africa, the other in Eurasia.

⁶⁷ Or else towards those people placed at lowest latitudes, all fact, these that, however, imply a nearer proximity towards those terrestrial zones from which start the lines of early human migration,.

⁶⁸ See (Musatti 1977) and (Sias 1997). In (Zetzel & Meissner 1976), the authors say that Freud already known the main essence of the trauma of birth before Rank.

anguish together a fear to be annihilated and overwhelmed. The situation which gives rise to such an anguish, is said to be *traumatic situation*, and re-evokes or re-enacts a kind of ‘‘conditioned reflection of the anguish’’.

Following (Ellenberger 1972), the Rank’s idea according to which every human being tends to return back to maternal womb was considered by C. Moxor as an anticipation of Freudian concept of death drive. Before Rank, Freud himself had already expressed the opinion that child anguish, as experienced during birth’s labour pains, were the prototype of every next anguish, even if, afterwards, Freud rejected Rank’s theory because threatened the pillar of his theory, that is to say, the Œdipus complex. On the other hand, as E. Glover noticed, some analysts, after Rank’s work on birth’s trauma, effectively discovered traces of this trauma in each of their patients. This fact, nevertheless, was neglected after that Rank’s trauma of birth was officially repudiated by Freud. In any case, Freud himself, since early 1900s, encouraged his co-workers and pupils to turn towards the study of myths. Indeed, in the Rank’s trauma of birth, just due to its universality and unavoidability⁶⁹, it is also possible to descry archetypical features, also on the basis of the simple fact that Rank surely known Jung’s work (see (Carotenuto 1999)), so that such a trauma has surely an archetypical source as well. Indeed, as regard the pioneering Stanislaw Grof researches, in the words of Karen Pohn of the Antioch University at Los Angeles,

«Grof’s work with psychedelics yielded many interesting insights that led him, during the 1960s, to create a new expanded cartography of the psyche. Grof’s Freudian training only took him so far – while some of the experiences that people had during psychedelic sessions reflected biographical material from childhood, there were many other experiences that did not correspond to the Freudian personal unconscious. Some subjects had experiences that seemed to be archetypal in nature, and were not consciously known to the person and thus seemed to reflect Jung’s notion of the collective unconscious. Still others had non-human experiences like becoming an eagle or a granite mountain, where they came away with insights that later were confirmed by research. Also, a significant number of people seemed to experience their own birth.

Otto Rank had previously written about the birth experience in his 1924 book The Trauma of Birth, which caused Rank’s ousting by Freud, much as Jung’s 1913 work Symbols of Transformation (Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido), [...] had caused Jung’s parting with Freud earlier. Indeed when Freud read Rank’s book, Freud was severely shaken for several months because he felt that Rank’s discovery was so important that it might eventually prove more important than Freud’s own work. Freud had earlier suggested that the trauma of birth might indeed be the blueprint for all future anxiety, and Rank ran with this idea. Indeed Freud referred to Rank’s book as ‘‘the most important progress since the discovery of psychoanalysis’’.

Rank believed that all human mental life has its origin in the anxiety and repression of the birth experience, and that later traumatic events derive their power from this trauma. He saw that in childhood and later life we are constantly trying to master this trauma and that the birth trauma plays an important role in religion, art, and history. Rank also felt the birth trauma must be relived to effectively treat neurosis. Jung’s Symbols of Transformation also contains material on the birth of the hero and death and rebirth motifs. These books that

⁶⁹ See (Cotsell 2005).

caused both Jung and Rank to split with Freud contained birth related motifs, proving birth to be a touchy subject.

[...] For Rank, the experience of paradise lost and the difference between the pre and post womb experience, was the trauma of birth, not the actual physical birth process itself. In other words, Rank felt that the trauma was in being expelled from the womb and being born, not the actual trauma that occurred as a result of the baby going through the rigors of labour. Rank felt that violence and weapon-making reflected a desire to get back into the womb, rather than focusing on the aggression that Grof associates with the passage through the birth canal. Grof's work elaborates and furthers Rank's work in that it concentrates on and articulates the importance of the actual physical stages of the birth process, which Rank did not consider.

Grof's expanded cartography of the psyche not only incorporated the Freudian personal unconscious, and the Jungian collective unconscious, but also the "Rankian level" that mirrored the birth process which Grof termed the perinatal level, meaning "around birth". This expanded cartography can be pictured as an hourglass with the personal unconscious at the bottom, the perinatal level at the meeting point of the two glasses and the collective/transpersonal unconscious, or archetypal level above, which includes but is not limited to Jung's notion of the collective unconscious, and is comprised of ancestral, racial, collective and phylogenetic memories, karmic experiences, and archetypal dynamics».

In conclusion, from what has just been said so far, above all with respect to its archetypal roots, it does not seem at all unreasonable to try to identify possible early origins of racism in offshoots of the trauma of birth deployed along the complicated and inextricable intertwined course involving ontogenesis and phylogenesis.

Third argument: on history of psychoanalysis

A recently published work upon the history and epistemology of psychoanalysis, namely (Lauro Grotto 2014), has pointed out some historical aspects and critical moments of Freudian scientific biography which have been quite neglected by previous literature and that yet deserve further attention. In this work, there are also three untranslated works of the young Freud. Apart the interesting and updated critical-epistemological analysis made by the author, in this place we wish to consider a particular aspect of the scientific life of the young Freud which has been put in the limelight, for the first time, just by R. Lauro Grotto. To be precise, she analyzes, with a correct historiographical methodology, what possible role played the *anatomo-pathological method* due to G.B. Morgagni, in the scientific training of the young Freud as well as in the rising of his first ideas on psychoanalysis. This method, introduced by Morgagni in 18th-century and exposed in his 1761 monumental treatise *De sedibus et causis morborum per anatomen indagatis*, threw the scientific bases for medicine. To sum up, starting from the clinical or phenomenological examination of the patient alive (first step), the causes for illness should be posthumously searched, after the previous anatomical inspection made during autopsy (second step), into the anatomo-pathological study of the lesions or of the tissue degenerations of the involved anatomical organs (third level), taking into account what has been taken over, with the highest precision, from the first two steps which are independent of each other. Therefore, only by the comparative examination of what has emerged

from the first two steps, in the light of the final data of the third and last step, we may infer the *explicandum*, by abduction, which will lead to the etiopathogenetic of the uneasiness that entailed death. The *abduction*, deeply studied by Ch.S. Peirce, is the typical inference mechanism (not logically but only probabilistically valid) used in medical semiotic: it consists in trying to infer the cause from the effect, schematically, if *A* implies *B* and *B* is given, then *A*. Now⁷⁰, it is known that Freud studied neurophysiology with E. von Brücke in Vienna and, after his graduation, began as hospital assistant either in the psychiatric clinic of T.H. Meynert and in the General Hospital as aid to Carl von Rokitansky. To be precise, following (Kandel 2012), Freud spend a long time of training, from 1881 to 1886, mainly as a clinical neurologist, having had important tasks of hospital responsibility in Vienna, before he went to Paris as an assistant of Charcot. In that period, he made notable clinical diagnoses whose related reports show a great and deep mastery by Freud as regard anatomo-pathological method. Freud, in his diagnoses constantly appealed to anatomo-pathological method, that is to say, regularly puts into continuous comparison and possible correlation two main parallel classes of observational data, the clinical ones coming from a phenomenological examination of the patient compared with analogous or related previous case reports or case studies drawn from available specialistic literature, and those coming from the pathological anatomy (theoretical-autoptic phase). Therefore, it is historically ascertained that Freud had a strong and professional clinical training before he turned towards the metapsychological theory. The clinical training acquired by Freud in the General Hospital was under the supervision of von Rokitansky who gave solid scientific bases to medicine introducing correlations between symptoms and causes of death also thanks to the valuable collaboration of Josef Škoda, a valid diagnostician. In such a manner, from this new type of medical collaboration, a fruitful relationship between the clinical information coming from the diagnosis of the patient alive and the outcomes coming from the autopsy after her or his death, gave rise to a new medical discipline called *pathological anatomy*, which was officially opened, in 1846, with the publication of the three-volume *Handbuch der allgemeine pathologischen Anatomie* (with a 1849 four-volume English translation *A treatise on pathological anatomy*) by von Rokitansky. In 1886, Freud then moved to the celebrated Salpêtrière clinic, where Jean-Martin Charcot worked and lectured. With his masterful clinical expertise, in Paris Freud tried to diagnose, in a deeper manner, some neurological disorders, like hysteria, as well as to study certain therapeutical techniques, amongst which hypnosis that he learned during his training in the Meynert psychiatric hospital in which he had to do with psychotic patients.

Freud used his experimental training in neurology as well as his clinical practice in psychiatry to study hysteria, hence calling into question either the anatomo-pathological method on the one hand and the hypnotic technique on the other hand. As early as 1860, G.T. Fechner published the first work on experimental psychology, the *Elemente der Psychophysik*, trying to use the experimental methods of natural sciences to study psychic phenomena, so opening the way towards a new trend officially institutionalized by W. Wundt in the late 1780s. The psychophysics, as a new scientific discipline, gradually arose from the works of Fechner also on the basis of previous ideas and works of J.F. Herbart, E.H. Weber, H. von Helmholtz and others, from 1850s onward. A positivistic view therefore came into psychological context. An imposing and wide experimental setting was settled to try to estimate those physiological evidences at that time measurable with experimental method, like stimulus-response phenomena, perceptive thresholds, and so on. Nevertheless, there was a not narrowed ensemble of illnesses which didn't have any possibility to be approached with scientific

⁷⁰ See (Vegetti Finzi 1986) and (Ellenberger 1972).

method, amongst which many psychopathological disorders, like hysteria, social marginalization, character aberrations, and so on. The hysteria was believed to be a female prerogative but that Freud later will prove affect males too. The classical medicine considered such an illness as due to not well specified uterine malformations or dysfunctions. It was Charcot the first scientist to correctly study such an illness. From a complete, assiduous and careful clinical observation of the related manifestations, he had classified the chaotic symptomatology (phobias, violent muscle contractions, momentary paralyses, convulsions, tremors, and so forth) laying out the related symptoms into precise nosographic frameworks, but without having a corresponding explaining functional model. He had already understood, on the basis of a negative neuropathological aetiology obtained with anatomo-pathological method, the need to seek the causes of this illness into the psychological sphere of the individual, but a basic contradiction plagued him. Indeed, on the one hand, Charcot considered the hysteric symptomatology as due to suggestion and simulation (because of lacking of organic lesions) whereas, on the other hand, he classified such an illness amongst neurological affections just for having used semiotic method. Freud tried to overcome this impasse bringing back considering hysteria as a specific disease having a specific aetiology whose causes should be referred to a non-organic entity, the *psyche*, which nevertheless, as we will see later, is unthinkable as disjoint from human body. With Freud, therefore, we have a first attempt to define psyche from a more scientific viewpoint. Freud speaks of a ‘‘disease for representation’’ as regard hysteria, that is to say, such disease is a psychic manifestation. In the meanwhile (early 1880s), Freud goes on with clinical-neurological researches, publishing notable results on aphasia and on infantile paralyses, continuing to ask what possible relationships there may be between psychic disease and the related organic substratum. In this regard, he noticed a difference between an hysteric paralysis and an organic one, mainly because the former seems to have a bodily distribution which does not respect the anatomical localization charts then known, but rather leads towards a *psychic conception* of body. But, notwithstanding that such a disease has a psychic source not well localized, Freud was unable to treat it, since the only psychotherapeutic method then available was hypnotic suggestion which nevertheless turned out to be inefficient for hysteria treatment. To this end, Freud moved to Nancy, in 1889, where worked the pioneers of the hypnotic technique, H. Bernheim and A-A. Liébault, and where he perceives that, through hypnosis, it is also possible to re-evoke past events which had been fully neglected by patients, that is to say, Freud recognized what role language may play in the relationship patient-doctor, having noticed a strange but important connection between words and symptoms. Freud immediately descried the existence of a close relation between *logos* and *body*, which opened the way to a new field of knowledge mainly centred on those interpersonal relations between patient and doctor or therapist which will lead later to the fundamental transference and countertransference phenomena. Therefore, Freud realized what close and deep connections there exist between psyche and body. The very early origins of psychoanalysis laid in somatic, that is to say, such a new doctrine’s field began as a *psychosomatic* trend⁷¹, where the notion of *bodily image* plays a very fundamental role. In 1891, Freud publishes a work on aphasia, in which he criticizes the functional organic approach of H. Jackson, while, in 1892, he publishes two first works on the possible mechanisms of hysteria, claiming that the main causes for this disease are not psychic traumas, as claimed by Charcot, but rather reminiscences of past ideas or events antithetical to the conscious will. In 1894, Freud publishes his *Studies on hysteria*, in which he puts forwards, for the first time, a sexual aetiology for neuroses.

⁷¹ See (Ammon 1992).

The crucial notion⁷² of *bodily image*, or *bodily scheme* (or *image of Self* or *postural scheme*) was firstly introduced by J.C. Scaliger in the 1550s, then retaken and variously redefined, amongst others, by H.C. Bastian (who first introduced the term of *kinaesthesia*, to be distinguished from *coenaesthesia*⁷³), J. Lhermitte, G. Bonnier, H. Head, G.M. Holmes, H. Munk, C. Wernicke, A. Pick, L. Van Bogaert, C. Menninger, P.F. Schilder, J. Gerstman, from 1850s throughout 20th-century. Within the various definitions of bodily image and bodily scheme, the notion of coenaesthesia should be laid out. The notion of bodily image acquired a scientific status after the notion of coenaesthesia which was closely related to the spatial perception or localization of our own body through the 1893 Bonnier's notion of bodily scheme. These pioneering sights of Bonnier were neglected until up 1900s, when it was retaken in dependence on the child psychic development along which an image of the own body gradually builds up above all thanks to the visual perceptions and the accrual of the sensorium plus other subjective influences⁷⁴. As pointed out by Lhermitte, one of the main features of bodily image is its integrity and the unifying sight, which persist even if, for example, an amputation takes place (as Charcot proved in 1888). Following (Stanghellini 2009), we have that

«Coenaesthesia is the word by which psychopathologists, and sometimes philosophers, talk of the internal perception of one's own body, whereas coenaesthopathy refers to abnormal bodily sensations. Both are quite neglected subjects in mainstream contemporary psychopathology, but they have represented a fundamental topic in French and German 19th and early 20th century psychiatry. The historian J. Starobinski speaks of an "imperialism of coenaesthesia" in the last century. It was J.C. Reil in 1794 who coined this term, indicating "the means by which the soul is informed of the state of its body". Coenaesthesia (deriving from Greek "koiné", aesthesis, common sensation) is defined as the global experience in which all the single bodily sensations are synthesized, the crossroads of all sensibility on which consciousness is grounded, including the feeling of existing, of being a self and of being separated from the external world. Affections of coenaesthesia are, especially to French early 20th century psychopathologists, the origin of psychoses. For instance, M. Dide and P. Guiraud thought that hebephrenia is characterized by the specific impairment of those cellular nervous systems presiding to the coenaesthetic and kynesthetic synthesis and to instinctual vital activity. Athymormia – the global disorder of instinct (hormé) – is considered

⁷² See (Shorter 1993), (Kumar Singh 1991) and (Costantino 2008).

⁷³ *Kinaesthesia* comes from the Greek terms κίνησις (*kinesis*), which means movement, and αἴσθησις (*aesthesis*), which means sensation or perception, while *coenaesthesia* comes from the Greek terms κοινή (*koiné*), which means common, and aesthesis, hence a common, usual and global sensation or perception, neither localized into a given anatomical organ nor coming from ordinary perceptive-sensitive organs (like hearing, vision, and so on) of neurovegetative system. Therefore, the latter seems to be the overall resultant of all those sensorial responses coming from the various internal parts of our own body (*proprioceptive* sensations) independently of the sensations coming from the ordinary perceptive-sensitive organs (*exteroceptive* sensations). In general, proprioceptive sensations have a subliminal nature, but often they become sensations which seem somatically felt by patient but really having a psychic nature (coenaesthopathies). Coenaesthesia is a primary irreducible sensation in which psychic and bodily are indistinguishable and merged together to give rise to the apperception of our basic existential sense, of the *élan vital*, as well as of the general running of our own internal body, a psychophysics union as the main source of wellness, displeasure, weariness, tiredness, etc. *Kinaesthesia*, instead, refers to muscle sensibility. Into the coenaesthetical framework should be laid out the origins of many psychic illnesses, like uneasinesses, hallucinations, illusions, etc., which are expressions of a psychic disorder rather than an organic impairment. See (Lalli 1999).

⁷⁴ We are conceptually very close to the Lacanian *mirror stage*, who historically referred to many of the above mentioned authors about bodily image, and drawn from (Costantino 2008).

“the spring of delusions” since delusions are supposed to be disorders of the “primordial psychic activity”, complicated and masked by the intellectual and affective superstructures of human thinking.

In a quite different vein, G. Huber defined as the fourth subtype of schizophrenia – next to paranoid, catatonic and simplex-hebephrenic forms – a clinical syndrome called coenaesthetic schizophrenia, characterized by abnormal bodily sensations. These are disorders of the lived body, painful and uncanny, that occur abruptly, and often migrate from one organ or bodily zone to another. Typical examples are feelings of extraneousness, or numbness, or non-existence of parts of one’s own body, sensations of paralysis, heaviness, abnormal lightness, of shrinking or enlargement, of movement or traction, etc. These abnormal bodily sensations may lead to psychotic symptoms, such as hypochondriac delusions and more typically delusions of being controlled. L.A. Sass remarked that these bodily sensations are not abnormal per se, but remarkably similar to those reported by normal subjects adopting a detached introspective stance toward their bodies. Schizophrenic coenaesthopathies are normal bodily sensations that are always present, even though we do not usually attend to them; what is abnormal is the way schizophrenic persons attend to them – they are abnormal since they are “lived in the perfectly abnormal condition of hyperreflexive awareness and diminished self-affection”».

Following (Ammon 1992), from a proper historical viewpoint, psychoanalysis born from a mere psychosomatic problem concerning the organic symptomatology of hysteria as well as anguish and actual neuroses. In doing so, Freud thrown the bases for psychosomatics, working out the first main psychosomatic conceptions which are still the founding bases of this discipline, and that identify two main classes of somatic symptoms which are psychically conditioned: precisely we have, on the one hand, the symptoms (that Freud calls *organ’s discourses*) which are, like in hysteria, the somatic conversion⁷⁵ of the outcome of a neurotic conflict which regards individual past, and, on the other hand, the ones which are equivalent to an anguish onset. According to Freud, the proper somatic symptoms psychically conditioned are the first ones, that is to say, the conversion symptoms from the psychic to the somatic, as in the case of neuroses in which the Ego produces symptoms (for instance somatic symptoms of the conversion type) when takes place a conflict between Ego and unconscious drive pushes. If the unconscious conflict is brought at the conscious level, then it vanishes. Instead, the case of symptoms as equivalent of an anguish attack is quite different from the case of the rising of somatic symptoms which were meant, by Freud, as the result of a deviation of the somatic excitation which is hindered in the access to the psychic dimension, that is to say, symptom symbolically communicates an impossibility of expression or desire. Freud, in doing so, breaks the traditional clear dichotomy between soul and body, instituting a *continuum* between them, materializing the psychic as well as psychologising the body. Moreover, Freud, above all in his 1894 work on psychoneuroses entitled *Die Abwehr-Neuropsychosen*, with the analysis and treatment of the somatic symptoms of conversion (psychoneuroses) opened the way to the psychoanalytic method (see the *case of Anna O.*) making use of hypnosis and of the J. Breuer cathartic method, while the analysis and treatment of those symptoms considered as equivalent to

⁷⁵ Freud usually speaks of *hysteria of conversion*.

an anguish's neurosis or to an actual neurosis⁷⁶, had to be delegated, according to Freud, to other approaches, like the psychosomatic medicine (which will be later officially inaugurated by F. Alexander). As pointed out in (Musatti 1977), although Freud himself will neglect later this distinction between psychoneuroses (amongst which hysteria, obsessive neuroses, and so on) and anguish and actual neuroses, the value of this classification relies, above all, in having claimed the attention on the main distinction between *psychic* factors and *somatic* factors of neurotic disorders. Finally, thanks to the reliable and deep knowledge of the Morgagni's anatomo-pathological method acquired by Freud during his post-academic training first as a neuroanatomist, then as an anatomo-clinical neurologist, from a history of science standpoint we might identify two main historical achievements arose from Freud's work. Firstly, just thanks to the constant presence of this Morgagni's method into the Freud background, for the first time, that general notion of psyche finally gained its first scientific status from an epistemological need due to the fact that, since it wasn't possible to identify any clinical or bodily counterpart to the symptoms showed by certain neurological illnesses (primarily, hysteria), then it was need to ascribe them to another entity, the psyche (with all its complex conceptual history, mainly belonging to mythological-philosophical context), which will be put in close and inseparable relationship with the body by means of a *continuum* that will be identified later by Freud himself and that will fill up that pernicious gap existing between soul and body. Secondly, the coenaesthesia notion, before Freud, wasn't considered a scientific concept but rather confusion producing, while, just thanks to the above introduction of the psyche entity, it was possible to assign a scientific status to the coenaesthesia notion as well, mainly thanks to the distinction between *exteroceptive* sensations and *proprioceptive* (or *enteroceptive*) sensations, so opening the way to psychoanalytic method. Just this new framework for coenaesthesia has been the theoretical construct upon which Freud settled his theory of object relationships⁷⁷. Indeed⁷⁸, from the symbiotic phase child-mother, in which the bodily image starts to build up when the *bodily Self* separates from the *psychic Self*, with the well-known psychosexual development. The crucial point concerns the self-erotic primary narcissistic phase characterized by the formation of a first coenaesthetic frame (bodily Self) along the symbiotic phase child-mother, from which, in a parallel manner, starts the formation of the psychic Self through the intervention of an object relationship which will allow to recognize at least one external object with respect to own body, through a shifting of the cathexis processes from *proprioceptive* sensation system (bodily image from symbiotic phase with narcissistic libido) to *exteroceptive* sensation system (psychic Self with an object libido), so distinguishing between internal and external objects.

⁷⁶ Whose symptoms symbolically do not refer to any unsolved unconscious childhood conflict, but are a direct (i.e., actual) consequence of an unsatisfied sexual excitation.

⁷⁷ Even if Freud never explicitly spoke of object relationship in his work but, at most, of object cathexis.

⁷⁸ See (Costantino 2008) and (Fossi 1984).

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